

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Amendments to paragraph [0003]

Problem analysis and problem solving tools assist the user by enabling the user to consider a complex system, and identify discrete problems which should be addressed, and suggest possible solutions. These tools accomplish this by providing computer based interfaces which assist in the application of well understood methods of problem analysis and problem solving including, but [[are]] not limited to, root cause analysis, TRIZ, value engineering, function analysis, and system benchmarking. An example of such a tool, called TechOptimizer, is a computer system marketed by Invention Machine Corporation of Boston, Massachusetts. The technology used in TechOptimizer to assist in problem analysis is partially described in U.S. Patent No. 6,056,428 and U.S. Patent No. 6,202,043. The system disclosed in these two patents is fully described in TechOptimizer User Guide, version 4.0, Invention Machine Corporation, Boston, Massachusetts. A natural language query and a semantically indexed database are described in U.S. Patent number 6,167,370 issued December 26, 2000 and involve the restatement of queries as well as the database indexing in terms of subject-action-object (SAO) in order to obtain only relevant responses from the search and for evaluating the appropriateness of the responses.

Amendments to paragraph [0010]

In one aspect the invention is a method and a system for [[that fpr]] obtaining solution suggestions for contradictional problems. It is performed using a program in a computer beginning with inputting a natural language query which is a restatement of a contradiction having at least two contradictional elements and having at least two semantic items as part of each contradictional element. The natural language query is then submitted to one or more semantically indexed databases and responses from the database(s) is/are communicated to the computer and the results then made available to the user by an output device.

Amendments to paragraph [0013]

In a further aspect of the invention a specific [[specif]] search criterion is combined with the natural language query and corresponding recurrent responses create dependence of the search results to the specific criterion based on variation in the search results to the recurrent different specific criteria.

Amendments to paragraph [0034]

It can be easily anticipated that the process described above and illustrated in Figures 3 and 4 can be combined with traditional search criteria like key-word search, Boolean logic, and so on. For example, the contradictional query 'how can we increase area, and decrease volume [[volume']] submitted to semantically indexed database representing semantically indexed patent collection, can be combined with the request that responses should arrive only from patents satisfying specific one or more criterion, like a specific key word in a patent title or abstract, or they have to belong to a specific patent class, or starting from or up to a specific issue or filing date, or extending over a specific time period (by issue date or filing date) . Other desired specific criteria are also possible. The full query therefore will look like [[in]] the following examples: